

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

For the Examiner's convenience, a list of all claims is included below.

1-44 (Canceled)

45. (Currently amended) An apparatus for delivering media to a wafer, comprising:

a housing defining a process chamber;

a spin chuck positioned in the process chamber, the spin chuck having a wafer support surface, the wafer support surface coated with a coating layer such that at least a portion of a particulate matter on the wafer support surface is encapsulated by the coating layer; and

a skirt positioned at a periphery and in a non-planar relationship to the wafer support surface such that a magnitude of radial thermal gradients in a wafer positioned on the spin chuck is reduced, wherein a lateral edge of the wafer support surface.

46. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the coating layer is comprised of a dielectric coating material.

47. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the coating layer has a composition including a substance from the chemical family SiO_xCH_y , with x ranging from 1-2, inclusive, and y ranging from 0-3, inclusive.

48-49 (Canceled)

50. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the coating layer material has a mechanical hardness equal to $\text{hardness}_{\text{coatinglayer}}$, and silicon has a mechanical hardness equal to $\text{hardness}_{\text{silicon}}$, and wherein $\text{hardness}_{\text{coatinglayer}}$ is less than $\text{hardness}_{\text{silicon}}$.

51. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the coating layer has a thickness in the range of 0.5-100 micrometers.

52 – 60 (Canceled)

61. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the wafer support surface provides a mechanical support for a wafer and the skirt is positioned to be in a non-mechanical supporting position relative to the wafer.

62. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the skirt is sized to permit a wafer positioned on the wafer support surface to extend beyond a periphery of the skirt.

63. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the skirt and wafer support surface are sized to be at least equal to a size of a wafer positioned on the wafer support surface.

64. (Canceled)

65. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45 wherein the wafer support surface has formed thereon a plurality of non-planar wafer contact points.

66. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 45 wherein the coating layer promotes a cross-linking of a material comprising the wafer support surface.

67. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein the mechanical hardness of the coating layer is sufficient to reduce a transfer of material from the wafer support surface to wafer.

68 - 69 (Canceled)

70. (Previously presented) An apparatus for delivering media to a wafer, comprising:

a housing defining a process chamber; and

a spin chuck positioned in the process chamber, the spin chuck having a wafer support surface, the wafer support surface coated with a coating layer such that at least a portion of a particulate matter on the wafer support surface is

encapsulated by the coating layer, and wherein the wafer support surface includes a line contact vacuum ring.

71. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 70 wherein the wafer support surface has formed thereon a plurality of non-planar wafer contact points.

72. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

a skirt positioned at a periphery and in a non-planar relationship to the wafer support surface, such that a magnitude of radial thermal gradients in a wafer positioned on the spin chuck is reduced, wherein a lateral edge of the skirt contacts a lateral edge of the wafer support surface.